

# Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council

## Nomination Form 2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award

I nominate the following individual for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.

Name of Nominee: Debbie Baldwin

Title of Nominee: Legal Assistant

Prosecution Office: Coconino County Attorney's Office

Length of time working in the office: Three Years

Address: 110 E Cherry, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Telephone: 928-853-8277 Fax: 928-679-8201

Nominee's E-mail: DBaldwin@coconino.az.gov

### Nominated by:

Nominator's Name: Jonathan Mosher

Title: Senior Trial Deputy

Agency/Organization: Coconino County Attorney's Office

Address: 110 E Cherry, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Telephone: 928-679-8277 Fax: 928-679-8201

Nominator's E-mail: JMosher@coconino.az.gov

Nominator's Signature: 

Date: 10/19/11

### **Justification For Nomination:**

Debbie Baldwin is a rare individual who possesses dedication and passion for her work, formidable organizational skills, and an intuitive sense of how to deal with the constant and wide-ranging demands of criminal trial work. In the past year, Debbie Baldwin has directly supported the trial of three first degree murder cases and a violent sexual assault which together involved four months in trial. The successful prosecution of each of those cases rested directly upon the foundation of Debbie's enormous volume of high quality work. Put simply, Debbie was the vital ingredient in each of these convictions.

By way of specific example, one of these first degree murder trials was the case of *State v. Kazuhiko Wilson*. This case involved the murder of Zachary Morgan, a heroin addict and dealer, by his "friend," Hiko Wilson, another addict and dealer. Not surprisingly, nearly everyone associated with these two individuals was an addict, a dealer, or a less than law-abiding citizen. Many of these witnesses were scared for their lives if they testified. Yet, we knew the defense would point to any missing witness as a potential "real killer." Thus, the crux of the case was getting these marginal witnesses to trial.

This is just one of many areas where Debbie shines. She did not just establish contact with these difficult witnesses. She worked with them, reduced their fears, and ensured that they were prepared to come to court and tell the truth. Debbie arranged to meet with one witness on a weekend when he came through town to be sure he had the transcripts of his statements. Nor was this a one-time occurrence. Debbie gets the job done, and if it involves commitment past five o'clock, so be it. By the time of trial, she had every one of those addicts, dealers, and "sketchy" witnesses waiting in the hallway, on time **and prepared**.

Cases are won and lost based on witness and victim credibility, and witnesses are more credible if they are prepared. Debbie is the link between this office and our victims and witnesses. Her skill and talent in working with people of varying backgrounds (from child

molestation victims to high school kids, to heroin addicts) are the foundation for our success at trial. I am convinced that because victims and witnesses notice Debbie's commitment and professionalism, they become more motivated themselves to read their prior statements as we ask of them.

Debbie's personal skills do not stop with victims and witnesses, who consistently inform me of their high regard for Debbie's work. Rather, she is known throughout this small town's legal community as top-notch. For example, judges, clerks, detectives, and bailiffs continually remind me how lucky I am to work with Debbie (I need no reminder!). Criminal defense lawyers in town are consistently trying to lure her away with promises of more money. Fortunately, Debbie regards the work we do as more important than merely the quantity of her paycheck. In this way, she is a real hero; she sacrifices personal gain because of her commitment to our community.

I could go on and on with stories of how Debbie's hard work saved the day in our trials. If a PowerPoint slide is needed instantly for a witness, it materializes, thanks to Debbie. Debbie keeps every file meticulously organized, but for trial she goes above and beyond, with every transcript, every exhibit, every photograph, at the trial team's fingertips. Perhaps most notable is her grace under pressure. To put it mildly, Debbie deals with high maintenance attorneys who are demanding of top notch effort. Yet, even in the midst of the most intense moments of trial, it always makes me smile to turn to Debbie and ask for something, because she will already have done it. In fact, she is so uncanny in her ability to anticipate what I might ask for next that I often tell her she reminds me of Radar O'Reilly, from M\*A\*S\*H, who would know what Colonel Blake wanted before he asked for it.

Having worked in a variety of professional settings, I have never encountered anyone who stays on task more than Debbie. Debbie works as though she is under a deadline every single day.

Debbie Baldwin is a committed, passionate winner. And she is a joy to be around. Our office often deals with human tragedy. In a way, it is a steady diet for us. And Debbie's humor, professionalism, skill, talent, and devotion are things that sustain this office in our work.

**Summary:**

Debbie Baldwin is a rare individual who possesses dedication and passion for her work, formidable organizational skills, and an intuitive sense of how to deal with the constant and wide-ranging demands of criminal trial work. In the past year, Debbie Baldwin directly supported the trial of three first degree murder cases and a violent sexual assault which together involved four months in trial. Debbie was **the** vital ingredient in each of these convictions.

Debbie works with victims and witnesses to ensure they are prepared to testify at trial. Her skill and talent in working with people of varying backgrounds are the foundation for our success at trial. Debbie keeps every document, exhibit, or photograph at the trial team's fingertips. Detectives, judges, clerks, and bailiffs consistently remark on Debbie's outstanding performance. Debbie's humor, professionalism, skill, talent, and devotion help sustain this office in our work.

**Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council**  
**Nomination Form**  
**2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award**

**I nominate the following individual for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.**

Name of Nominee: Kathy Durrer

Paralegal

Title of Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

Prosecution Office: Yavapai County Attorney's Office

Length of time working in the office: 9 years

Address: 255 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

Telephone: 928-777-7126 Fax: 928-771-3110

Nominee's E-mail: Kathy.durrer@co.yavapai.az.us

**Nominated by:**

Nominator's Name: Sheila Polk

Title: Yavapai County Attorney

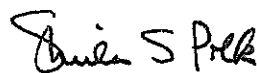
Agency/Organization: Yavapai County Attorney's Office

Address: 255 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

Telephone: 928-777-7352 Fax: 928-771-3110

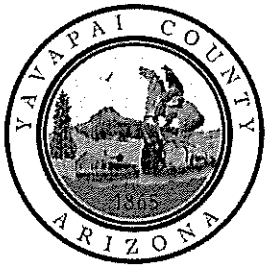
Nominator's E-mail: Sheila.polk@co.yavapai.az.us

**Nominator's Signature:**



10-21-11

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Yavapai County Attorney

255 East Gurley Street  
Prescott, AZ 86301  
(928) 771-3344 (Criminal)  
(928) 771-3338 (Civil)  
Facsimile (928) 771-3110

SHEILA POLK  
Yavapai County Attorney

## Nomination of Kathy Durrer Arizona Paralegal of the Year Award

I am writing to nominate Kathy Durrer for the award of Arizona Paralegal of the Year. Kathy is not only a paralegal with the Yavapai County Attorney's Office; she is a retired Major of the United States Air Force and a former school teacher. She has a BAS in Operations Management from Troy State University in Troy, Alabama; an MBA in Resource Management from Saint Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas; an MEd in Language Arts Secondary Education from Auburn University in Montgomery, Alabama; and an AA in Paralegal Studies from Yavapai College in Prescott, Arizona. Her lifelong thirst for knowledge continues to this day and can be readily observed in the way she approaches her work.

Since Kathy joined this Office in 2002, she has quickly risen to be one of our most experienced and tenacious paralegals. Kathy is always focused on the task at hand, goes above and beyond her duties, and has high legal and ethical standards. She is always professional, well-organized, and has excellent writing skills and thorough research skills. She focuses on the facts, takes initiative to recognize when things need to be done, and never complains about working long hours or working on weekends to meet a deadline. Kathy has a cool and calm demeanor, is always eager and willing to help attorneys in the Office, and helps maintain this Office's reputation as being tough on crime.

Among Kathy's primary duties are the Office's Rule 32 Petitions. Kathy researches, writes the Responses, and provides them to the attorneys for review before filing. Although it is the attorney's signature on these pleadings, Kathy's legal research and writing skills are so superlative that most pleadings need little to no editing. I was recently told by a staff attorney at the Arizona Court of Appeals that the Rule 32 Responses filed by my office are the best in the state. I enjoyed his utter shock when I told him it is Kathy and other paralegals within the office who handle these pleadings.

Kathy's experience and reputation often precede her. It is not uncommon to hear such comments as, "It is a shame Kathy does not have a bar license" or "Kathy writes better than most attorneys." Prosecutors within the Office have also said "Her case preparation is bullet-proof. You never have to worry because she's made sure everything has been done correctly." She has all that it takes to be an attorney. Yet, Kathy will tell you herself she is comfortable in being a paralegal.

Due to Kathy's great legal and organizational skills, she is often juggling numerous complicated, complex and high profile cases with tight deadlines. Among the latest of those cases is the manslaughter case against self-help author and guru James Arthur Ray, also known

as the Sedona Sweat Lodge case. In October of 2009, a sweat lodge ceremony was held where three people died and many others suffered serious injuries due to prolonged heat exposure. Kathy mastered over 8,000 pages of disclosure, including a memorable time when the defense attorneys were alleging on the record that the State had never disclosed a supplemental report by one of the witnesses. She heard their bald-faced claim over the live CNN feed from another room and ran down the hallway into the courtroom with the copy of the disclosure statement showing they had in fact received the report.

This case has been filled with its fair share of drama, including a defense team that repeatedly stressed to the Court that the Ivy-League lawyer they were using to write motions had previously clerked for two terms at the United States Supreme Court. It was Kathy who drafted 90% of the State's responses to these novel and legally complex motions before, during and after trial. I can assure you, I would take the hard work and high ethical standards of Kathy over that pedigreed lawyer any time.

Kathy was an essential part of the prosecution team and assisted with analyzing issues, voicing opinions on strategy, etc. She would put in a full days' work in the courtroom, commute two hours a day, then would perform research and check emails from opposing counsel at night. She went through voluminous transcripts on very short notice and always located what the prosecutors needed. Kathy took time during the trial to explain the terminology and procedures of what was happening to the victims so they could follow along and be a part of the process. On June 22, 2011, the jury returned guilty verdicts of three counts of Negligent Homicide against James Ray and sentencing is scheduled for November 18, 2011. While she was concentrating on this trial, her son was taking part in Operation Odyssey Dawn, the operation to enforce the no-fly zone over Libya.

There are other major cases in which Kathy's skills have been both beneficial and impactful. The first case was a matter in which four men were involved in a local investment scam. The investment fraud took place throughout Yavapai County between 2002 and 2005, and involved the theft of \$1.6 million dollars from 21 local vulnerable elderly investors. With the help of Kathy's military experience in accounting and auditing, the State was able to convince the Defendants that there was no reasonable way they would prevail at trial. The men pled guilty and three of the men are each serving approximately 10 years in prison.

Another case involved a very prominent woman in the area (a candidate for state senate) who owned a construction company and withdrew funds from the company account after writing checks to the subcontractors which were not negotiable. Again, Kathy's extensive experience in accounting and auditing closed any reasonable loopholes in defense of the charges. The woman pled guilty to Theft, a class three felony and was placed on probation, and was ordered to pay substantial restitution to the victims. Within six months, Kathy discovered the Defendant was not paying the Court ordered restitution and a Petition for Revocation of Probation was filed. Another prosecutor otherwise unfamiliar with the case was able to obtain an order of violation and revocation of probation through Kathy's guidance and understanding of the intricate details of the case (all while Kathy was in the Sedona Sweat Lodge trial). This time the Defendant was sentenced to prison for 3.5 years.

Outside the office, Kathy plays as hard as she works. She enjoys going camping and hiking with her husband and dog in the wilds of Arizona. She loves to gather with her family and children whenever possible. Kathy is also a marvelous cook, and we enjoy eating her delicious dishes when she brings things into the Office!

I could go on and on listing the accomplishments and direct impact Kathy Durrer has had in the successful prosecution of cases in our Office, and she continues to take on more major and complex cases every day. I cannot think of a more fitting and deserving paralegal in the State of Arizona to be the first recipient of this award.



Kathy Durrer has been a paralegal with the Yavapai County Attorney's Office since 2002. Among Kathy's primary duties are responding to the Office's Rule 32 Petitions. Kathy researches, writes the Responses, and provides them to the attorneys for review before filing. Her research and writing skills are so superlative that most pleadings need little to no editing. Kathy also handles numerous complicated, complex and high profile cases, organizing disclosure, drafting motions and responses, organizing trial exhibits and any other duties required. Kathy's background in accounting and auditing while in the military has made her invaluable in assisting with obtaining convictions in large, complicated fraud cases as well.

Kathy assisted County Attorney Sheila Polk in her prosecution of James Ray (Sedona Sweat Lodge trial) while also handling her assigned Rule 32 cases. Although this past year was an extremely hectic one for Katy, she maintained her poise and delivered outstanding results.

# Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council

## Nomination Form

### 2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award

I nominate the following individual for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.

Name of Nominee: Christine Kolesar  
Title of Nominee: Legal Assistant  
Prosecution Office: City of Phoenix Law Department  
Length of time: 14 years  
Address: 300 W Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85003  
Telephone: 602-262-6237 Fax: 602-262-7052  
Nominee's E-mail: christine.kolesar@phoenix.gov

#### Nominated by:

Nominator's Name: Michael Norville  
Title: Assistant Trial Bureau Chief  
Agency/Organization: City of Phoenix Law Department  
Address: 300 W Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85003  
Telephone: 602-262-7081 Fax: 602-262-7052  
Nominator's E-mail: mike.norville@phoenix.gov

Nominator's Signature: /s/ Michael Norville

Date: 10/21/2011

## **Nomination Of Christine Kolesar**

### **For Arizona Legal Assistant of the Year Award**

For 14 years of dedicated and loyal service to the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office and the Legal Assistant Unit and especially for her outstanding and exceptional performance this past year, I would like to nominate Christine Kolesar for the Arizona Legal Assistant of the Year Award.

The City of Phoenix has the following Vision and Values statement:

We are dedicated to serving our customers;

We work as a team;

We learn, change & improve;

We work with integrity;

We value and respect diversity;

We each do all we can;

We focus on results; and

We make Phoenix better!

Christine is the embodiment of these ideals and she demonstrates this on a daily basis.

During this past year, Christine was selected as the back-up to the Legal Assistant Supervisor and she has handled these additional duties extremely well. Further, our Office instituted a new system (entitled eDiscovery) that allows discovery to be sent electronically. Due her vast experience, Christine was selected to serve on the development committee and proved to be a very valuable asset to the committee. In addition, she ensured the interests of her Unit were handled to the benefit of all. There were many procedural changes involved in this transition and Christine was intimately involved every step of the way.

When Christine's supervisor was out of the Office this past year, she stepped up and seamlessly handled all of her supervisor's duties in addition to her own daily duties. She commanded the Unit with ease and confidence. Further, due to the different schedules worked by Christine and the supervisor, Christine regularly receives the incoming calls informing her that an employee will not be in that day. Christine ensures everyone is informed of the absence and makes sure all time critical work is handled, including often covering the project herself.

In addition to being the back-up to the supervisor, Christine is responsible for handling a full legal assistant case load, which has increased significantly over the past year due to budget cutbacks. Even while handling her ever increasing

work without complaint, Christine is the consummate team-player. She is very quick to offer her assistance to her co-workers and is always offering to help wherever needed.

Once our new eDiscovery process was developed, Christine quickly made a suggestion to use that system to disclose other complex communications of the Legal Assistant Unit to the defense. This suggestion was quickly adopted and has resulted in a tremendous savings of time and money to our Office, to the Legal Assistant Unit, and to the defense attorneys. It saved time because the documents could be provided to the defense attorney the same day they were created, and they can be sent without the legal assistant having to wait for the clerk to process the file. Additionally, the discovery clerk who would have processed the correspondence is now able to concentrate on other job duties and has been utilized to take on new responsibilities. And it saves money in copying and mailing costs. This suggestion has led to other bureaus documents being disclosed this same way and resulting in further savings.

During this past year, Christine has been recognized for outstanding service by many prosecutors in our Office. The common words used in all the notes of recognition were "great job". One Prosecutor appreciated the effort she put forth in locating two victims from a 2002 case. The victims appeared and the defendant pled guilty. Without Christine's excellent research skills, this case would have had a different outcome. Christine was also recognized for obtaining a good contact name and phone number at the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to more quickly track defendants that are in ICE custody. Another Prosecutor appreciated her quickness in obtaining information we don't normally obtain. Again, this demonstrates Christine's willingness to assist in any way she can. Christine has a can-do attitude and it shows in her daily work.

During this past year, Christine Kolesar has demonstrated outstanding and exceptional performance. She is a dedicated employee of the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office and of our Legal Assistant's Unit. Christine has made numerous contributions toward achieving the goals of this Office. Christine is clearly deserving of this year's Arizona Legal Assistant of the Year Award.

## **KOLESAR NOMINATION SUMMARY**

Christine Kolesar has made extraordinary achievements as a legal assistant with the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office since 1987. During this past year, she has been the embodiment of outstanding and exceptional performance in her duties.

Christine was a valuable member of our new eDiscovery development team and she used that process to make a suggestion that resulted in huge savings of both

time and money to both our Office and to defense attorneys. This suggestion also led to other savings and increased services.

For going above and beyond, Christine has received many notes of recognition from Prosecutors. The common words used in them were "great job". In addition to carrying an ever increasing case load, this year she was selected to serve as back-up to the supervisor of her Unit. For her extraordinary efforts, Christine is deserving of the Arizona Legal Assistant of the Year Award.

# Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council

## Nomination Form 2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award

I nominate the following prosecutor for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.

Name of Nominee: Karen Mathis  
Title of Nominee: Paralegal  
Prosecution Office: Pima County Attorney's Office  
Length of time working  
in the office: 13 years  
Address: 32 N. Stone Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85701  
Telephone: 520-740-5545 Fax: 520-623-4671  
Nominee's E-mail: karen.mathis@pcao.pima.gov

**Nominated by:**

Nominator's Name: Barbara LaWall  
Title: County Attorney  
Agency/Organization: Pima County Attorney's Office  
Address: 32 N. Stone Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85701  
Telephone: 520-740-5622 Fax: 520-740-5495  
Nominator's E-mail: barbara.lawall@pcao.pima.gov

Nominator's Signature: Barbara Lawall

Date: Oct 19, 2011

**Nomination of Karen Mathis  
for the 2011 APAAC Legal Assistant of the Year Award**

**SUMMARY**

Karen Mathis is a paralegal in the Pima County Attorney's Office with the Violent Offenses and Gang Unit. In 1998, she graduated with High Honors from Pima Community College with an *Associate of Applied Science Legal Assistant Degree*. Karen has been with PCAO for 13 years and has worked on some very high profile cases.

She has provided support in 72 homicides, and her support was crucial to the prosecution team in the *State v. Shawna Forde* case, a home invasion that resulted in the horrific murder of a child and her father in May 2009. Three separate trials were held in 2011. Ultimately, justice was served as the defendants were convicted of first degree murder, with the jury returning death sentences in two of the convictions. A prosecutor on the case said that "Without her contributions, there is no doubt that the case could not have been a success."

**WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION**

Karen Mathis worked on the *State v. Shawna Forde* case, a savage home invasion that resulted in the horrific murder of a nine-year old girl and her father in May 2009. In 2011, Karen provided support to prosecutors in three separate trials all while working on other cases. Ultimately, justice was served as the defendants (Shawna Forde, Jason Bush, and Albert Gaxiola) were convicted of first degree murder, with the jury returning death sentences in the convictions of Forde and Bush.

Karen was an essential part of the prosecution team. The case file was extensive, with at least 20 boxes containing: police reports, witness statements, lab reports, and more. Karen devoted countless hours ensuring the case was thoroughly prepared. Thousands of pages of information had to be evaluated and absorbed. She organized and made information easily accessible to the team. While no one could be expected to memorize the contents of the 20 boxes, when information was needed or questioned, Karen knew the answer or knew exactly where to retrieve it.

In addition to preparing the case, Karen took part in planning the presentation of the case. She made suggestions about evidence based on her knowledge of the case and prepared exhibits to help illustrate that evidence. A large part of the evidence came from the defendants' text messages. Karen culled through hundreds of texts for evidence that illustrated the defendants' conspiracy and helped prepare a PowerPoint presentation to show the jury exactly how the messages were linked and how the defendants attempted to conceal their actions.

During the 1+½ years before trial, the defendants made numerous phone calls from jail and had many visits that were recorded. Hundreds of hours of conversations had to be carefully perused. This meant listening to numerous, and mostly meaningless, conversations, in order to garner a scrap of information to help prove the case. This work on the case continued, even during trial. Karen's perseverance paid off one night when she stayed late to listen to one more recording and heard a defendant describe to a friend how the defendant had been able to fool the psychologist who was going to testify and would describe the defendant's IQ and mental condition. The jury heard the defendant's statements about misleading the psychologist; the jury looked angrily at the defendant and never looked back. The defendant was convicted and sentenced to death.

Karen was instrumental in coordinating witnesses. Several witnesses were uneasy about the media attention the trial garnered and feared retaliation, but Karen kept the witnesses focused and calm. Karen also worked with the victims. She has an ability to connect with victims and develop a rapport with them, answering questions, reassuring them, gathering information, and making sure they have a voice in the judicial system.

The trials lasted from January-July 2011. During the time Karen worked on these trials, she worked on other cases and had to contend with the requirements of three prosecutors, one of whom describes her as superhuman. They said Karen is an enormously effective paralegal. Prosecutors rely on her, have great confidence in her, and consider her an integral part of the legal team. One prosecutor said: "Karen's sharp legal mind helps her discern information that is critical to develop in a case and information that is more peripheral. When I am in trial, she seamlessly helps me with issues that arise while prioritizing what needs to be done on other cases."

Prosecutors describe her as: "smart, experienced, and tireless. She makes a prosecutor's job easier." One said: "Having another legal mind on cases means that more issues and needs are caught, anticipated, and dealt with in advance."

Without the solid foundation of a well-prepared, researched, and worked-up case, prosecutors would not be able to win in court. Karen is proactive in her approach to cases, she works up a case and then takes another look to see what else is needed to complete or strengthen the case. She refers to the prosecutor's evaluation of the case, but makes an independent analysis, which takes extra time and effort, but results in catching additional problems or issues, and allows for a more well-rounded analysis of the witnesses and the case. Karen's knowledge about the law and the cases, about state-of-the-art technology, her work ethic, and her commitment to justice help make her a successful paralegal. Karen helps win cases.

For her exceptional commitment to justice, her dedication and willingness to do whatever is necessary to fairly and justly hold defendants accountable and protect the community, I am honored to nominate Karen Mathis for the 2011 Arizona Legal Assistant of the Year Award.



## Elizabeth Iniguez

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**From:** Stephanie McCarthy <SMcCarthy@apachelaw.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 20, 2011 4:28 PM  
**To:** Elizabeth Ortiz; Elizabeth Iniguez  
**Cc:** Michael B. Whiting; Michael B. Whiting  
**Subject:** Legal Assistant of the Year Nomination  
**Attachments:** IMG01716-20111020-1537-McCarthy.jpg

**Categories:** Legal Assistants

Elizabeth,

Please accept this email as the nomination for Legal Assistant of the Year for Ms. Stephanie McCarthy. I have complied with application requirements as set forth below. It is without hesitation and with great pride I write this 750 word justification and ask that you please award Ms. McCarthy the 2011 Arizona Legal Assitnat Award.

1. Nominator: Michael B. Whiting, Apache County Attorney, [whiting@frontiernet.net](mailto:whiting@frontiernet.net), P.O. Box 637 St. Johns AZ, 85936 (928) 337-7560
2. Nominee: Ms. Stephanie McCarthy, Legal Program Coordinator, Apache County Attorney's Office, [smccarthy@apachelaw.net](mailto:smccarthy@apachelaw.net), P.O. Box 637 St. Johns AZ, 85936 (928) 337-7560, (fax) 928 337-2427, Five (5) years with the office.
3. Written justicifaction (see below)
4. 150 word summary : Stephanie's personality is as big as her smile. She is very caring and articulate. She is always positive and trains other office members to accomplish many tasks. Last year she handled three (3) cases that generated national attention. She has undertaken the very difficult task of being in charge of our entire office's finical duties. Please understand that this office simply would grind to a slow halt without her constant vigilance and attention to detail. She is, in the truest sense of the word, an employee every employer dreams of having on their team. We could NOT do it without her. I am sure there are several legal assistants in the state who work as hard as she does, but I am certain that none accomplish as much, or wear as many hats and do it with a smile and such professionalism.
5. Recent head shot photo (attached)

Introduction: Although 750 words is not length enough to tell you of the invaluable and incalculable work Ms. Stephanie McCarthy performs for the Apache County Attorney's Office, below is the "written justification" for Ms. Stephanie McCarthy as Legal Assistant of the year:

Stephanie's personality is as big as her smile. She is very caring and articulate. She is always positive and trains other office members to accomplish many tasks. Last year she handled three (3) cases that generated national attention. She has undertaken the very difficult task of being in charge of our entire office's finical duties. Please understand that this office simply would grind to a slow halt without her constant vigilance and attention to detail. She is, in the truest sense

of the word, an employee every employer dreams of having on their team. We could NOT do it without her. I have detailed a few of her accomplishments and duties over the past year. I am sure there are several legal assistants in the state who work as hard as she does, but I am certain that none accomplish as much, or wear as many hats and do it with a smile and such professionalism.

**Criminal Case Load:** Ms. Stephanie McCarthy was the lead legal assistant in the handling of several very difficult and high profile cases. First, she handled all secretarial aspects of the case involving the 8 year old who killed his father and family friend. She dealt with national and local media in a professional and competent manner. She had the difficult task of consoling and advocating for extremely confused and distraught victims in this case. Next, she was the lead legal assistant in the only death penalty case in the history Apache County. Again, she spent many hours working with the defense attorneys, victim's family members and court staff to help resolve this case. She was required to learn the rules of disclosure as they pertain to death penalty cases and did an outstanding job. Finally, she was again the lead legal assistant in the only serial killer case in the history of Apache County. She kept in constant contact with the three victims' family members, processed hundreds of motions and other documents to keep the case organized and moving, and again dealt with many media and public records requests.

**Financial Duties:** Our Chief of Staff (COS) was called to serve our county in Afghanistan. As a result, Ms. McCarthy was directly responsible for all the financial transactions of the Apache County Attorney's Office. Our COS is a CPA and undertakes all the financial reporting for grants, office expenses, etc. Ms. McCarthy took several months of training from both the accounting department and the COS over satellite phone to learn the system. She was responsible for the grant reporting and all other financial aspects of the office including accounting for the diversion program, the RICO account, the Bad Check Program, payroll, reimbursements, travel expenses and paying the office bills.

**Training:** She is often in charge of office training and does an excellent job. She took the initiative to purchase all the Microsoft Office tutorial DVDs to train the other staff members. She also trained the staff on the use of Judicial Dialog, our case management software. Further, she trains the new legal secretaries at the front desk and does an exceptional job. She administers yearly reviews and is looked to for input on promotions and raises as well as her concerns should discipline be required. Finally, she trains others regarding the bad check and diversion programs.

**Other Duties and Accomplishments:** She spent countless hours in helping the staff and new attorneys transition smoothly from the prior administration to the current one. She sits on the interview panel for each applicant and participates in hiring decisions for each new member of the team. Further, she also helped design our new office building, from secretarial placement, to the file room layout, to the conference room. Finally, she schedules all meetings, coordinates the conference room with probation and is our liaison with all other county departments. She is a jack of all trades and a master of each. **In the three (3) years I have been County Attorney I have never recommended anyone for an APAAC award. I do not take this lightly and can say without reservation Stephanie McCarthy is truly deserving of this award. Please strongly consider her and award her this distinction for her unparalleled contribution to the justice system in Arizona.**

# Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council

## Nomination Form

### 2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award

I nominate the following prosecutor for the Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year.

Name of Nominee: Molly Pasquarette

Title of Nominee: Paralegal

Prosecution Office: Maricopa County Attorney's Office

Length of time working in the office: 15 years

Address: 11 W. Jefferson St., 5th Fl., Phoenix AZ 85003

Telephone: 602 372 7250 Fax: 602 372 0000

Nominee's E-mail: pasquare@mcaad.maricopa.gov

Nominated by:

Nominator's Name: Heather Kirka

Title: Deputy County Attorney

Agency/Organization: Maricopa County Attorney's Office

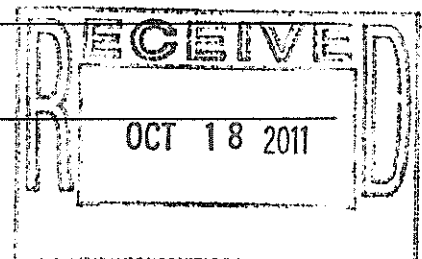
Address: 11 W. Jefferson St., 5th Fl., Phoenix AZ 85003

Telephone: 602 372 7250 Fax: 602 372 0000

Nominator's E-mail: Kirkah@mcaad.maricopa.gov

Nominator's Signature: [Signature]

Date: 10/4/11



The Maricopa County Attorney's Office nominates Molly Pasquarette for APAAC's 2011 Legal Assistant of the Year Award. Molly is the sole paralegal for Preliminary Hearing Bureaus A and B. She has been in this position for three years and in the office for 15 years.

The Preliminary Hearing Bureaus are comprised of 24 attorneys and are responsible for the Downtown Regional Court Center (RCC), Downtown Early Disposition Court Center (EDC) and 17 justice courts. The RCC and EDC centers are comprised of five courts and handle the preliminary stages of mid- to low-level and simple drug possession felonies. Discovery, initial plea offers, and witness preliminary hearings are handled here. The attorneys assigned to a justice court are responsible for the prosecution of all misdemeanors and petty offenses arising out of those courts.

As you can see, being the sole paralegal of both bureaus is quite demanding. Molly's nomination is not based on a specific project, but for all that she accomplishes throughout the year. Molly's primary responsibility, regardless of which court the request is originating from, is discovery. To accomplish this, Molly must maintain and develop good law enforcement contacts, familiarize herself with the different law enforcement agencies' discovery procedures, and develop an effective system to comply and stay current with discovery requests. Since discovery is also needed from crime labs, Superior Court, municipal courts, and justice courts, it is critical for Molly to acquaint herself with all of their processes as well. By having a well-established rapport with all of these entities, Molly ensures that she receives the discovery in a timely manner. She regularly processes over 150 discovery requests a month!

Molly is additionally taxed with maintaining MCAO's repository of COBRA and Intoxilyzer records for all Intoxilyzer machines (roughly 44) that are used in over 2/3rds of the county's justice courts. This requires Molly to maintain regular contact with the respective QAS officers to ensure that the records are accurate and complete.

Molly deftly stays on top of all these responsibilities, all while striving to improve the bureau and work flow. In particular this year, Molly worked to improve the Discovery Request Form which the attorneys use to request discovery from her. She made it more "user-friendly" which has improved efficiency while minimizing mistakes and miscommunication.

Molly's ability to stay organized and on top of her duties, all while being innovative, makes her MCAO's nominee for APAAC's 2011 Legal Assistant of the Year.

MCAO's nomination for APAAC's 2011 Legal Assistant of the Year is Molly Pasquarette. Every year, Molly strives towards improving her job and work flow. This year was no exception as Molly worked towards improving the Discovery Request Form that the attorneys use to request discovery from her. Her changes increased efficiency while minimizing confusion and miscommunication. Aside from these efforts that go above and beyond Molly's regular responsibilities, her everyday duties are also demanding. Molly assists 24 attorneys working in 19 different courts including RCC, EDC and justice court. Molly routinely processes over 150 discovery requests a month. Additionally, she is responsible for maintaining MCAO's repository of all records for all Intoxilyzers that are used in DUI prosecutions for over 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the justice courts in Maricopa County. This workload and pace requires a high level of organization, which Molly possesses. For all of these reasons, Molly is our nomination.

**Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council**  
**Nomination Form**  
**2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award**

**I nominate the following prosecutor for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.**

Name of Nominee: Milca Pimienta

Title of Nominee: Legal Assistant – Domestic Violence Unit

Prosecution Office: Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office

Length of time working in the office: 10 years

Address: 2150 N. Congress Drive, Nogales, AZ 85621

Telephone: 520-375-7780 Fax: 520-375-7793

Nominee's E-mail: mpimienta@co.santa-cruz.az.us

**Nominated by:**

Nominator's Name: George Silva and Liliana Ortega

Title: County Attorney; Chief Deputy

Agency/Organization: Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office

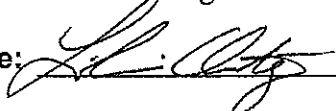
Address: 2150 N. Congress Drive, Nogales, AZ 85621

Telephone: 520-375-7780 Fax: 520-375-7793

Nominator's E-mail: lortega@co.santa-cruz.az.us

**Nominator** Liliana Ortega

**'s**

**Signature:** 

October 21, 2011

Date: October 24, 2011

## **MILCA PIMIENTA NOMINATION NARRATIVE:**

It is with great pleasure that the Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office nominates Milca Pimienta for the Legal Assistant of the Year Award. Milca has worked in our office for ten years. She began working as a clerk, and was later promoted to secretary for the misdemeanor caseload. Her impressive work and dedication led to her current assignment as legal assistant to the challenging Domestic Violence and Sexual Offenses caseload.

Milca manages complex cases including sexual assaults, child molestations, murders, as well as all of the domestic violence cases. Any prosecution office can appreciate that this caseload is not only professionally challenging, but emotionally so. Despite this, she is always upbeat and engaging and is always pleased to accept any task assigned to her. Her exceptional performance in our office is a testament to her ability and character. Milca is absolutely a delight to work with.

Milca has the unique gift of being able to see problems that may arise in a potential case and taking the initiative to preemptively remedy those issues. For example, our office recently decided to take a closer look at one of our cold cases. The case involves the murder of Lorena Dicochea Garcia in 1997. Her decomposed body was found near Patagonia Lake three months after she went missing.

As soon as Milca heard that we were reviewing the case, she promptly offered to help. We eagerly accepted. Realizing that the case involved two different crime scenes in two law enforcement jurisdictions, she wanted to make sure that we had everything that the officers had, and vice versa. She gathered all the documents in our office and compared them to everything the agencies had to make sure that every scrap of information in their possession made its way to our office. Indeed there was information we did not have in our file. She compiled all the information and organized every piece of evidence for the prosecutors. But she didn't stop there. She anticipated correctly that multiple prosecutors and detectives in our office would be reviewing the case. So, she duplicated all of the organized binders into five separate copied sets so that everyone would be "on the same page". It is this foresight and attention to detail that makes her such a great asset.



Milca accomplishes everything asked of her without complaint. Two years ago we created a Victim Services Unit. Because of space restrictions, the Victim Services office had to be housed off-site. This meant that Milca had to leave her close-knit family at our building, and relocate. Although she personally preferred to be with her friends in the same office she had been in for eight years, she willingly packed her desk and moved. From that point forward, she had to make multiple trips daily between offices. This made her job more challenging, but she accomplished it with a smile on her face. She never complained because she knew it was best for the office.

There is one more thing we feel you should know about Milca. She is modest, and so the following information is not something that is public knowledge, even to some of the people within our own office. She is working on her paralegal degree, and has a virtually perfect GPA. As she learns new skills in school, she incorporates them into her cases, even though it means more work. No one asked her to take on the extra work, but she does it anyway. Her ambition shows her relentless dedication to her career, and our office.

We hope the Council gives serious consideration in presenting Milca Pimienta with the Legal Assistant of the Year Award. Her performance certainly warrants it. Thank you for your attention.

## **MILCA PIMIENTA SHORT NOMINATION NARRATIVE:**

It is with great pleasure that the Santa Cruz County Attorney's Office nominates Milca Pimienta for the Legal Assistant of the Year Award. Milca has worked in our office for ten years. She manages complex cases including sexual assaults, child molestations, murders, as well as all of the domestic violence cases. Any prosecution office can appreciate that this caseload is not only professionally challenging, but emotionally so. Despite this, she is always upbeat and engaging and is always pleased to accept any task assigned to her.

Milca has the unique gift of being able to see problems that may arise in a potential case and taking the initiative to preemptively remedy any issues. She is currently assigned to a cold murder case, and her foresight and attention to detail has been invaluable.

Milca accomplishes everything asked of her without complaint. Recently we created a Victim Services unit at an off-site location. This meant that Milca had to leave her close-knit family at our building, and relocate. Although she personally preferred to be with her friends in the same office she had been in for eight years, she willingly packed her desk and moved. From that point forward, she had to make multiple trips daily between offices. This made her job more challenging, but she accomplished it with a smile on her face.

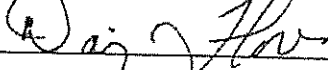
**Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys' Advisory Council**  
**Nomination Form**  
**2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award**

I nominate the following individual for the *Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year*.

Name of Nominee: Misty Price  
Title of Nominee: Executive Administrative Assistant  
Prosecution Office: Gila County Attorney  
Length of time working in the office: 9 years  
Address: 1400 E. Ash Street, Globe, Arizona 85501  
Telephone: 928-402-8646 Fax: 928-425-3720  
Nominee's E-mail: mprice@co.gila.az.us

**Nominated by:**

Nominator's Name: Daisy Flores  
Title: Gila County Attorney  
Agency/Organization: Gila County  
Address: 1400 E. Ash Street, Globe, AZ 85501  
Telephone: 928-402-8643 Fax: 928-425-3720  
Nominator's E-mail: dflores@co.gila.az.us

Nominator's Signature: 

Date: 10/13/11

Misty Price joined our team in 2002 and has in all areas of the office and currently serves as my Executive Administrative Assistant. Misty's quiet/unassuming demeanor hides a "tigress of detail" so that her superb organizational skills and attention to detail contribute to our success.

We prosecuted a challenging child pornography case. Misty was an integral part of ensuring this pornographer was convicted and is now serving 90 years in prison. Misty patiently made a multitude of changes to trial exhibits (including over 100 items of child pornography), prepared 200 jury questionnaires and also kept track of "challenging" witnesses, one of whom even filed his own motions. She handled all witnesses with grace and poise.

Despite the nature of the offenses, she did not shy away from discussing difficult aspects of or contributing to the theory of the case. Misty was the reason this office was ready for trial

NOMINATION  
2011 Arizona LEGAL ASSISTANT of the Year Award  
MISTY PRICE, Executive Administrative Assistant  
OFFICE OF THE GILA COUNTY ATTORNEY

Misty Price has worked for my office since 2002. She joined our team as a legal secretary and has worked in all areas of the office including handling felonies, misdemeanors, juvenile delinquencies and administrative assignments. Misty currently works as my Executive Administrative Assistant and I share her with my deputy, Ramai Alvarez.

Ramai Alvarez recommended Misty for the Legal Assistant of the Year award for her work on the complicated trial she recently assisted on. My office prosecuted a challenging child pornography case in 2011 wherein the defendant was a prominent community member. Misty Price was an integral part of ensuring this pornographer was convicted and is now serving 90 years in prison. Misty patiently made a multitude of changes to trial exhibits, witness line-up, and other trial preparation documents. There were over 100 items of child pornography and she kept track of it all and maintained the items in such a way so the pornography was secured. She prepared 200 jury questionnaires in preparation for jury selection at trial. She also kept track of some "challenging" witnesses, one of whom even filed his own motions with the court. She handled all witnesses with grace and poise.

Despite the nature of the offenses, she did not shy away from discussing difficult aspects of the case or contributing to the theory of the case. Misty was the reason this office was ready for trial. As if this trial was not enough work, Misty was also preparing three other cases for trial simultaneously, including a sexual assault case with more difficult witnesses and stacks of physical evidence.

During the course of the child pornography trial, she helped keep track of the trial's progress, of all the State's numerous witnesses, of several boxes of evidence and work product of two prosecutors. She worked after hours, never complaining about having to be away from her children. She made sure that the prosecutors did not have to worry about unrelated issues and could just focus on the trial. During the course of the trial, the Judge's Judicial Assistant was unavailable and Misty assisted in making changes to jury instructions for the court. When the trial was over, the trial judge commented that Misty was "the real star" of our case. We could not agree more.

This case is only one example among many wherein Misty's superb organizational skills and attention to detail have contributed to our success. Misty's quiet and unassuming demeanor hides a "tigress of detail" that we all aspire to. Simply, Misty is a thorough assistant who anticipates the needs of her attorneys. She adds valuable insight to cases and is a vital member of our prosecution team. I whole heartedly nominate Misty Price for Legal Assistant of the Year.